



**OFFICIAL REPORT**  
AITHISG OIFIGEIL

# Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee

**Thursday 8 September 2016**

**Session 5**



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba



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**Thursday 8 September 2016**

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**STANDARDS, PROCEDURES AND PUBLIC APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting 2016, Session 5**

**CONVENER**

\*Clare Adamson (Motherwell and Wishaw) (SNP)

**DEPUTY CONVENER**

\*Patrick Harvie (Glasgow) (Green)

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

\*Tom Arthur (Renfrewshire South) (SNP)

\*Clare Haughey (Rutherglen) (SNP)

\*Daniel Johnson (Edinburgh Southern) (Lab)

\*John Scott (Ayr) (Con)

\*Alexander Stewart (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)

\*attended

**CLERK TO THE COMMITTEE**

Douglas Wands

**LOCATION**

The James Clerk Maxwell Room (CR4)



## Scottish Parliament

### Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee

*Thursday 8 September 2016*

*[The Convener opened the meeting at 10:00]*

### Decisions on Taking Business in Private

**The Convener (Clare Adamson):** Good morning, everyone, and welcome to the third meeting in session 5 of the Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee. The first item on the agenda is a decision on taking item 4 in private. Do we agree to do so?

**Members** *indicated agreement.*

**The Convener:** The second item is to consider whether to take in private future consideration of reports from the Commissioner for Ethical Standards in Public Life in Scotland and our own reports on complaints. The committee is also invited to take in private future consideration of draft reports and draft standing order rule changes on mandatory committee remits. Is that agreed?

**Members** *indicated agreement.*

## Work Programme

10:01

**The Convener:** The third item is consideration of our future work programme. I invite general comments from committee members on the work that is being carried forward from the previous session and the proposals for future work that have been prepared by the clerks.

**Patrick Harvie (Glasgow) (Green):** I do not think that there is any great need for a radical change to the work programme as it is presented. The one issue that has moved on is that of parliamentary liaison officers. We have seen a change to the previous practice by the Government, and it would be worth using the time that we had intended to use to address that issue to consider whether there needs to be greater clarity about the definition of that role and whether that needs to be reflected in the standing orders. It might be worth our discussing that with the Scottish Government in the first instance.

**The Convener:** Are there any other comments on the issue of PLOs?

**John Scott (Ayr) (Con):** I agree with what Patrick Harvie has just said. It would be welcome if the Minister for Parliamentary Business were to be invited to come to the committee to explain how he sees the situation evolving in this new environment.

**Daniel Johnson (Edinburgh Southern) (Lab):** I agree with Mr Harvie. I would also like some work to be done on similar roles in other legislatures so that we can compare practices.

**The Convener:** I thank committee members for their consideration of the issue. It has moved forward considerably in the past few weeks. I suggest that we seek the clarity that is required by the committee by writing to the Government to ask for its position on PLOs, by inviting the minister to come and discuss how he feels that the role will work going forward, given that it requires a change to committee rules, and by asking the Scottish Parliament information centre to provide a paper that compares the role with similar roles in other legislatures, so that we have an indication of what happens elsewhere. Is the committee content with those proposals?

**Members** *indicated agreement.*

**The Convener:** Thanks very much. Is everyone content with the rest of the work programme? We have had a request from the Presiding Officer to carry out two specific pieces of work: one is on the standing order remits of the mandatory committees of the Parliament, and the other is on the future gender balance of the Scottish

Parliamentary Corporate Body. Is everyone content to carry out those pieces of work?

**Members** *indicated agreement.*

**The Convener:** Thank you very much. Are there any other items that members want to examine that are not included in the papers? It is my intention to review the work programme regularly throughout the year, to ensure that the committee's work is meeting the Parliament's requirements.

**John Scott:** We have plenty to get started on. I am certain that work will evolve over the session. It will become obvious when we need to address something, and there will be time enough then.

**The Convener:** On that note, we move into private for agenda item 4.

10:05

*Meeting continued in private until 10:58.*

This is the final edition of the *Official Report* of this meeting. It is part of the Scottish Parliament *Official Report* archive and has been sent for legal deposit.

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